

AUTHORIZING SPEAKER TO ENTERTAIN MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES ON TODAY

Mr. BERMAN (during consideration of H.R. 1886). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Speaker be authorized on this legislative day to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules relating to House Resolution 529.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1256. An act to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products, to amend title 5, United States Code, to make certain modifications in the Thrift Savings Plan, the Civil Service Retirement System, and the Federal Employees' Retirement System, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 407. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an increase, effective December 1, 2009, in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, to codify increases in the rates of such compensation that were effective as of December 1, 2008, and for other purposes.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2254

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2254.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 848

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 848, the Performances Rights Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

CONDEMNING SHOOTING AT U.S. HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 529) condemning the violent attack on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10, 2009 and honoring the bravery and

dedication of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum employees and security personnel.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 529

Whereas, on June 10, 2009, an armed assailant with ties to white supremacist organizations, a conviction for a violent crime and a history of anti-Semitic and racist activities opened fire at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum;

Whereas, the gunman was a convicted felon and obtained a firearm in violation of Federal law;

Whereas, security personnel at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, U.S. Park Police, and other emergency responders, responded quickly and valiantly to ensure the safety of museum visitors and staff and other bystanders;

Whereas, Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns, who had worked at the Museum for six years, was fired upon by the gunman and later tragically succumbed to his wounds;

Whereas, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum was established by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, which was created by Congress in 1980 (Public Law 96-388) and mandated to create a permanent living memorial museum to the victims of the Holocaust;

Whereas, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum was dedicated on April 22, 1993 and has since welcomed nearly 30 million visitors, including more than 8 million school children and 85 heads of state;

Whereas, the primary mission of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum is "to advance and disseminate knowledge about this unprecedented tragedy; to preserve the memory of those who suffered; and to encourage its visitors to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust as well as their own responsibilities as citizens of a democracy."

Whereas, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum serves as one of the world's leading authorities on the Holocaust;

Whereas, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, created to remind us of what happened and what could happen when hatred turns into violence, has tragically become a target itself;

Whereas, the attack at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum is a horrific reminder of the violence that can stem from anti-Semitism, racism, hatred, intolerance, and Holocaust denial;

Whereas, President Obama stated, "This outrageous act reminds us that we must remain vigilant against anti-Semitism and prejudice in all its forms. No American institution is more important to this effort than the Holocaust Museum, and no act of violence will diminish our determination to honor those who were lost by building a more peaceful and tolerant world": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the violent attack on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10, 2009;

(2) honors the bravery and dedication of the employees and security personnel at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and rededicates itself to the safety and the security of the Museum and its visitors;

(3) offers its condolences to the family of Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns who was killed in the line of duty;

(4) redoubles its commitment to advance the mission of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial

Museum to educate people about the Holocaust and fight against anti-Semitism, racism, hatred and intolerance; and

(5) urges the American people to join the Hour of Representatives in condemning this act of hateful violence and intolerance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, this resolution places this body on record as condemning yesterday's violent attack on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, while also praising the bravery and sacrifice of those who defended against this attack. The resolution further recognizes the powerful and vital role that the memorial museum plays in the world and rededicates this Congress to assisting wherever possible in helping the museum to accomplish its mission of education and enlightenment.

First and foremost, let me join my colleagues in expressing our deep sadness and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Security Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns. It is our hope that, despite what must be nearly unbearable grief, those who loved Officer Johns are also filled with enormous pride at the service he rendered during his distinguished career and the sacrifice he has now made.

Everyone involved in the tragic events of yesterday proved something about themselves. Officer Johns, along with the security and other emergency personnel who responded, proved that training, dedication and bravery in the face of life-threatening events can save lives.

Officer Johns in particular reminds us that there are those among us who volunteer to stand watch over us, even knowing that they are risking their own lives.

The perpetrator of yesterday's attack proved something as well. His actions demonstrate that ignorance and hatred still exist and too often lead to violence. By his actions, this man demonstrated that the very evil which led to the Holocaust, the very evil he had sought in the past to deny, still exists and still must be resisted vigilantly.

And going forward, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum will prove something as well. There was a time when people with hatred in their hearts were powerful, a time when those who devalued others based on race or religion held in their hands the levers of power. Those days are over.

The museum has suffered a great loss, but the museum will continue in its important work. This attack has no power over the museum, its supporters or its mission.

Hatred can no longer beat back the forces of justice and equality. Whatever the dark aims of the attacker may have been, there is no question that he has failed, and those like him will always fail as long as organizations like the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum are standing.

I ask my colleagues to support this important resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I join with Chairman RAHALL to support this resolution to condemn the tragic shooting at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum yesterday. Our prayers go out to the family of Security Officer Steven Tyrone Johns, an innocent victim of this outrage.

Mr. Speaker, that this violent act and needless death occurred at a memorial erected to peace and tolerance by reminding the world of the deaths and horrors of the Holocaust is, to me, simply unspeakable.

So, Mr. Speaker, I simply urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield 2 minutes to the main sponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN).

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 529, a bipartisan resolution that I authored with Mr. PENCE, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. SMITH and Mr. ENGEL, and I thank the Speaker for promptly bringing it to the floor today with the input and guidance from many other Members of this Chamber, as well as the bipartisan Congressional Task Force Against Anti-Semitism.

I rise today in great sorrow as this Nation mourns the loss of Officer Stephen T. Johns, who was killed in the line of duty yesterday at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at the hands of a hateful white supremacist.

Today I offer condolences to the family of Officer Johns and condemn in the strongest possible way the vicious attack on the Holocaust Memorial Museum and all that it represents.

The museum is a place of reflection, an expression of the adage "never again." The museum seeks a world without racism, anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial and intolerance.

The target may have been the museum and Jews, but this vicious attack hurt all Americans. A hate crime in every sense, this attack violates all of us. Acts of hatred and violence cannot and will not be tolerated in our coun-

try. Today, the lessons of the Holocaust are more relevant than ever before. Officer Johns died protecting those values, and he is a hero to all of us.

Americans stand today together to redouble our commitment to advance the mission of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, to advance Holocaust education and fight against anti-Semitism, racism, hatred and intolerance in the United States and throughout the world. Only by standing together can we begin to heal and fight against future acts of hatred.

I thank both the Democrat and Republican leadership of the House, Mr. RAHALL and Mr. HASTINGS, for their support. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished Republican Caucus Chair, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 529, condemning the violent attack on the Holocaust Memorial Museum that occurred in shocking dimensions yesterday here in our Nation's Capital.

I want to single out my colleague in the majority, RON KLEIN of Florida, for his swift and thoughtful legislative work in bringing this resolution to the floor and for allowing me to coauthor this bipartisan resolution before the House today. It has been my distinct pleasure to serve together with Mr. KLEIN as the cochairman of the Bipartisan Congressional Task Force Against Anti-Semitism that was founded, I say with deep admiration, by the late Tom Lantos of California, who understood the importance of this body and this Nation speaking with one voice against the venom of anti-Semitism.

Today, we mourn the loss of Special Police Officer Steven Tyrone Johns, and I offer my personal condolences to his family. He lost his life while defending civilians, visitors and staff of the Holocaust Memorial Museum. Officer Johns died upon arrival at the George Washington Hospital after being shot by an assailant with strong ties to white supremacist organizations. Officer Johns died while bravely defending museum visitors from around the world, and I honor his service and courage and the sacrifice that he exemplified. He will be remembered.

We rise today to condemn the violent attacks of yesterday that ravaged Washington, D.C.'s, permanent living memorial to the victims of the Holocaust. For those who have visited, we know the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum serves as one of the world's leading authorities on the Holocaust. And let me say with no small measure of American pride, it has become an es-

sential stop for every American visiting our Nation's Capital, with few exceptions.

It was dedicated on April 22, 1993, and has since welcomed nearly 30 million children, including 8 million schoolchildren and 85 heads of state.

The museum's mission is simply this: to "advance and disseminate knowledge about this unprecedented tragedy; to preserve the memory of those who suffered; and to encourage its visitors to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust as well as their own responsibilities as citizens of a democracy." Anyone who has wandered those solemn hallways knows that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum accomplishes that mission.

□ 1545

This attack at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum is a horrific reminder of the violence that can stem from unchecked hatred, intolerance, anti-Semitism, as well as the denial of history that is often manifested in that sentiment.

Let me be clear. No act of violence will ever diminish our determination to honor those who lost their lives in the Holocaust, and neither will yesterday.

And as we condemn intolerance and racism in our Capital City, we should ponder today, Mr. Speaker, what anti-Semitic hatred and rage could mean on the international stage. I say with a heavy heart today, with the deepest respect for the families affected by yesterday's tragic events, we would do well, as a Nation, to reflect, if one man can walk in the Holocaust museum with a rifle, motivated by anti-Semitic rage and bring about violence and death, what could a nation, armed with the same anti-Semitic rage, do with a nuclear weapon?

The American people deserve to know that the same hatred that drove this one, lonely and deranged man to open fire at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, I believe, resides in the hearts of some of the most powerful leaders in an ancient nation of the world. And I am confident that when the time comes, this Congress, this government, this Nation, and our cherished ally, will do what is necessary to prevent a global manifestation of anti-Semitic violence.

The best way to honor the lives of victims of hatred is to stand in the path of those who would continue the violence. Let Officer Johns' sacrifice be an example for each of us in our personal lives, and an example for this Nation in the exercise of courage and determination in the defense of liberty on the world stage.

Let us stand in the path of hatred, come together as a Congress and a Nation.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from the District of Columbia, in whose district this terrible attack occurred, ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday the majority leader announced that he had not been able to muster enough votes to pass a civil rights bill, the District of Columbia Voting Rights Bill, which had a gun amendment which would wipe away the District's gun laws leaving us defenseless.

Yesterday, a brave young man, Stephen Tyrone Johns, a guard at the Holocaust Museum, one of our most popular museums because it is so moving, lost his life.

There are political considerations that keep us from moving directly against gun laws. I ask us to show that we are not defenseless to protect official Washington, not paralyzed when it comes to gun safety, by at least passing, but not allowing gun amendments to stop unrelated laws like the District of Columbia Voting Rights Act and opening the city to gun carnage of the kind we saw yesterday.

Let this be the last gun carnage of its kind. Let the District of Columbia Voting Rights Act pass this year.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the bringing of this resolution. This is a time when we should join our hearts and minds together in condemning the violent act that occurred at, of all places, the Holocaust museum, a place that I, with countless others, in my case, multiple occasions going to the museum, have been touched to tears to just try to get your mind around the inhumanity of man to man.

This is a Nation that was brought together as a Nation, fought hard, so that within this Nation we could have civility. And one of the Founding Fathers' favorite lines was often to quote Voltaire in saying, I disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.

The criminal who invoked and created this violence in the Holocaust museum should be properly punished, and I am thankful that we have laws that will punish him. I wouldn't mind seeing a death penalty as a possibility in the case of such violence, but in this town that is, apparently, not an option. But violence of this nature within this country must not be tolerated.

But it also must not minimize the commitment, the love and devotion of Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns, who gave his life in doing his job in devotion to others and to this country and all it stands for.

So we thank Stephen Tyrone Johns. We thank his memory. We thank his family, and we will pray for their peace and healing during this very, very difficult time.

We condemn the attack, such a violent nature, encourage all to understand that in this Nation, in every State, in the District of Columbia, no matter how someone may disagree with someone else, provoking words are never a defense to violence. Violence

must be condemned, no matter what someone deems to be the provocation in their own mind.

We must be and we must make this a Nation of civility. We can disagree. Disagreement is a good and healthy thing. When there's disagreement, it means we're not all useless. But we must never allow this kind of violence to go unaddressed.

So we pay tribute to the Johns family—our prayers will be with them—and condemn the violent attack at the Holocaust museum, of all places, and appreciate this resolution being brought forward.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, Officer Johns resided in the district of our next speaker, to whom I'm going to yield 2 minutes, the gentlelady from Maryland, Ms. DONNA EDWARDS.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 529.

Mr. Speaker, it's with great sadness that I rise today to honor the life and memory of Stephen Tyrone Johns, the security officer who courageously gave his life protecting the lives of others during yesterday's shooting at the Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Officer Johns' quick action and sacrifice may indeed have saved the lives of people at the Holocaust Memorial Museum yesterday and certainly enabled his fellow officers to secure the museum.

The armed assailant, who had connections with the white supremacist organizations and a long history of anti-Semitic and racist activities, walked into the Holocaust museum and opened fire, resulting in the tragic murder of Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns. This was a murder based on hate and malice, and took the life of a good man.

A security officer for 6 years at the Holocaust Memorial Museum and resident of Temple Hills, Maryland, which is the district which I represent, Officer Johns was beloved by his family and friends. Colleagues called Officer Johns "Big John." He was known as a gentle giant, and remembered for his friendliness, soft-spoken nature and gentle demeanor.

This morning, I had the opportunity to speak to Officer Johns' mother and stepfather. The entire family is grieving this senseless loss. Above all, the family wanted America to know that Stephen was dedicated to his job and his family. His mother said he loved his job, and he took his duty at the Holocaust Memorial Museum very seriously, so seriously that he ended up paying the ultimate sacrifice.

As we join Officer Johns' family in struggling to find answers, the truth is that this was a senseless act and a senseless murder that has resulted in a great loss. Officer Johns' sacrifice is a stark reminder of the threat of hate and intolerance to our humanity.

I want the family of Officer Johns to know that I, along with my colleagues here in Congress, am grieving with

them, and America is grieving with them.

In addition to his family and friends, Officer Johns leaves an 11-year-old son, Stephen Tyrone Johns, Jr., to mourn his loss. So it is with a heavy and sad heart that I offer my sincere condolences to the family of Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns. He will always be remembered as a dedicated and beloved hero.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire how much time is on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 10 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from West Virginia has 12½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. My understanding is my friend from West Virginia has more requests for time than I do, and I'd be more than happy to yield him 9 of those 10 minutes to dispense with as he sees fit, with the understanding, if I do get some Members, I can reclaim some of that time. And I ask unanimous consent that he control that 9 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. RAHALL. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS).

I now yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Mrs. DAHLKEMPER).

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today profoundly troubled and deeply saddened by yesterday's senseless acts of violence that occurred at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

My thoughts and prayers are with the family of Stephen T. Johns, the security officer whose life was taken in that tragic event. I am so grateful for his service and the service of all the security officers who work to keep us safe.

Yesterday's action was a shocking reminder of the progress we have yet to make against bigotry, ignorance and hate. The gunman's attack was not only against one man, but against an important idea of human dignity for all.

However, as a Nation, our resolve must remain strong, and our response must be very clear. There is no place for anti-Semitism and racism in the United States of America.

I urge my colleagues to join me in renewing our commitment to ending hatred and violence by supporting House Resolution 529.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California, Ms. BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, let me first say thank you to the gentleman from Florida for introducing this resolution, and I rise in strong support of it.

The Congressional Black Caucus extends our heartfelt condolences to the

family of Officer Stephen Johns. He was an American hero. He was an African American. He was slain in this senseless act of violence at the Holocaust museum, which preserves the memory of a period in the world, a period borne of violence, of hatred, of death, a period that must not be forgotten.

The death of Officer Johns reminds us, however, that racism and anti-Semitism in all its ugly forms must be condemned and fought at every, every turn.

We extend to Mr. Johns' family our deepest sympathy as you mourn the loss of your loved one. He will be a hero in all of our minds who we will remember and who will remind us of the unfinished business of our country. We offer our condolences and our assistance to the family, should the family need us during this time of need.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California, Ms. SUSAN DAVIS.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in supporting this resolution.

The Holocaust museum offers more than an important education opportunity for so many people worldwide. It is a symbol of the need to continue our efforts to reduce intolerance, prejudice and hatred in the world.

It was over 15 years ago when I led a group of young people from San Diego to visit the newly opened museum, a group of high school students from all walks of life who were participating in a mentoring program. I was the executive director of that program and made it a point to put a visit to the Holocaust museum on our agenda.

□ 1600

It was such an emotional moment for many of these teenagers who until that day had never fully comprehended what the Holocaust meant.

So I want to add my voice in expressing heartfelt condolences to the family of museum guard Stephen Tyrone Johns. His courage and his sacrifice will not be forgotten in a place that we always say "Never again."

Also to be recognized and praised are the security guards who subdued the gunman and prevented a tragic incident from becoming even more tragic.

This incident hit me hard yesterday because I happened to be standing at the museum 2 days before the very time that this incident occurred, and it was so pleasing to see the people who were gathering there and who flock to it all the time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. HANK JOHNSON.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, yesterday a despicable act occurred. By now everyone knows what it was and why it was; so I won't belabor that, other than to say that hatred is something that leads to violence. So we should all be looking deeply within our hearts to remove hatred and to try to value humanity.

Officer Stephen Johns leaves an 11-year-old son, whom I saw on TV yesterday, and I don't think he could cry, he was so overwhelmed, and then his mother and his grandmother were too distraught to talk. So they need our prayers, and I send out my condolences to the family.

It happened yesterday that a black man, doing his duty at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, was killed. Our communities have worked so diligently in the past. We have such strong bonds, and so we are there for each other.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DRIEHAUS).

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to this tragedy and to honor the family of Mr. Johns, who was tragically killed yesterday at the Holocaust museum.

When I come to the floor and when I think about this job and what we are trying to do, to send a message to our children across this country, it is a message of tolerance. It is a message of trying to wipe out hatred, trying to wipe out the hatred that exists against different races, different religions, different cultures. It is about learning to accept and appreciate the cultures.

The Holocaust museum stands as a tribute and helps us better understand the tragedies that occur when intolerance runs amok. I stand with my fellow colleagues and the people of this body in honor of Mr. Johns to say we believe in tolerance, we believe in acceptance, and we thank him and his family and we mourn with them.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada, Ms. SHELLEY BERKLEY.

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank my colleagues Mr. WAXMAN and Mr. KLEIN for putting this resolution together.

Mr. Speaker, the shooting at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is a sad reminder of how anti-Semitism, intolerance, and hatred can lead to senseless acts of violence and death.

My deepest condolences go out to the family of our security officials, Officer Johns, who was killed while defending the visitors and staff of the museum. His bravery and actions in the line of duty are to be commended and will long be remembered.

This disturbing attack on Washington's Holocaust Memorial Museum and the accompanying loss of life underscore the importance of teaching each new generation about the causes of the Holocaust and how we must work together to prevent the spread of intolerance and hatred based on religion, ethnicity, race, color, anything you choose. This shocking and horrific hate crime should be condemned by all Americans. We must speak with one voice that this is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the United States of America.

This resolution is a worthy first step in this effort. I urge unanimous vote in

favor of this resolution by my colleagues.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio, MARY JO KILROY.

Ms. KILROY. Mr. Speaker, to the grieving family of Stephen Tyrone Johns, I offer my deepest sympathy. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

And to the men and women in blue, especially those serving here on Capitol Hill, I offer my condolences at the loss of your brother officer and recognize the courage and devotion to duty he displayed at the cost of his life. I know that our Nation's police forces stand ready each and every day to serve and to protect.

This particular outrage is all the more heinous because of the place of the crime, our National Holocaust Memorial Museum, and because its perpetrator had a repeated history of public expressions of racism and anti-Semitism.

It is long past time for us to come together as a Nation and put an end to racism, to put an end to anti-Semitism, to put an end to homophobia, and to eliminate hate crimes; to come together and say that hatred and intolerance should not be allowed, that we should be able to end this as a community and come together in a Nation that respects each other for the true gift of the individual that each of us is.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday a terrible tragedy happened right here in Washington, D.C. It's sad when we see that there are people in this country that have so much hate in their hearts, and it's sad that this person went out to try to kill as many people as possible and being at the Holocaust museum.

Stephen Johns was there to protect the people in the museum, and he lost his life. He lost his life being a hero, by trying to save as many people there as possible.

Mr. Speaker, each and every day, there are killings; there is hatred that leads to these kinds of killings. It's got to stop. We can stop it here in Congress if the American people would actually put their voices a little bit higher and tell their Representatives the violence needs to stop. Violence on every level is totally wrong. Violence to innocent people is totally wrong. We need to do a better job in stopping the hate in this country.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 529, the resolution condemning the violent attack yesterday at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

My heart goes out to the victim's family.

This innocent man was going about his workday and his life was taken in a despicable act of violence.

But Steven Johns' selflessness and heroism saved the lives of others who could have been caught up in the violence.

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum serves as a powerful rebuke of the violence

and hatred that resulted in the loss of millions of lives during World War II.

Yesterday's events there serve as a painful reminder of the importance of combating violence in any form.

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum has educated millions of Americans about the horrors and hate crimes of the Holocaust.

Sadly, yesterday, the Holocaust Museum became known for another tragic hate crime.

Hate crimes and hate groups are on the rise in our Nation.

Hate groups have terrorized too many Americans.

This horrible act also serves as another example of the need to end gun violence in the United States.

We need to make sure that we do everything we can to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

The suspect in this terrible crime was a convicted felon and should never have been able to get his hands on a gun.

Too many of the wrong people have access to guns.

We are seeing more and more of these senseless crimes take place.

The rate of gun violence in this country is totally unacceptable.

There is something that we can do.

We can pass sensible gun laws in this Nation that will save lives.

We need to keep guns out of the hands of the people that can do the most harm with them such as convicted felons and the mentally ill.

We also need to close the gun show loophole, which allows people to buy guns without any background check at all.

And Congress should pass my bill, the No Fly No Buy Act, which prohibits people who are on the TSA's "No Fly List" as known or suspected terrorists from purchasing guns.

We can never prevent every gun death in this country, but we do have tools that can limit gun violence and would be effective now.

I urge my colleagues to work together with me to make sure that we do everything we can to limit gun violence in this country.

Please support this resolution so that we can send a strong message that hate and violence will not be tolerated by this Congress.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, it's nearly a decade ago that in my district a hate-monger came with a gun and pointed it at young men and women, people, families who were leaving their synagogue at the beginning of the Sabbath. And when he wasn't able to kill anybody there, he drove down the street and saw an African American standing in front of his house with his children in Skokie, Illinois, and shot and killed Ricky Birdsong, a community leader and a beloved member of that community.

We've made some progress in extinguishing anti-Semitism and hatred. We have certainly worked toward it. And yet yesterday at the Holocaust museum, a place dedicated to remembering the lives of senselessly killed millions of people, another shooter was there.

But standing in his way was Officer Johns, Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns,

who died in defense of tolerance in our country, against intolerance in our country, and saved probably the lives of many, many people in doing so because that shooter was going on to kill others.

We owe him and his family a debt of gratitude and send condolences to those who loved him.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank all of those who are involved, Mr. KLEIN of Florida and members of the House Anti-Semitism Caucus and others, certainly the chairman of the committee, Mr. RAHALL, and others for giving us an opportunity to speak on the floor to express our grief and our outrage over what happened yesterday.

When the news came to the Capitol of what had happened at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, we were shaken, shaken to the core that this could possibly happen.

The resolution today allows us to express some of the grief that we have and the strongest denunciation of the despicable hate crime perpetrated yesterday and to express our strong support for the work of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Some of us were there that rainy, rainy day when the Holocaust Memorial Museum was dedicated. Elie Wiesel spoke to us so profoundly about what it meant, not only in terms of memory and never forgetting what happened in the Holocaust, but what our responsibility is to the future. At the time the Bosnian crisis was happening. So while the Holocaust Memorial Museum is about something that happened in the past, it is a memorial and a reminder to us about ridding our societies of these kinds of attitudes.

So how ironic, how ironic that this person, this individual, would go into that museum with hate in his heart, a gun in his hand, and kill this beautiful man, Stephen Johns, who really gave his life. He guarded others with his life. And I would like to take a moment to pay special tribute to Stephen Johns, whose life was cruelly taken yesterday.

Stephen was known to his colleagues as "a soft-spoken, gentle giant." Stephen loved his hometown football team, the Redskins, and he loved to travel across the United States. Sad to say—well, it was a happy moment for him—but sad that it was such a short time ago he had married and moved to Temple Hills, Maryland, just 10 minutes away from his mother.

Stephen died in the line of duty, doing his job to protect those who came to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. We honor him today. We honor his sacrifice and his service.

In the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, anyone who has visited there knows there is a flame that burns in remembrance to all who died in the Holocaust. It lights the room over a

coffin of Earth gathered from the death camps, concentration camps, sites of mass execution and ghettos in Nazi-occupied Europe and from cemeteries of American and European soldiers who fought and died to defeat Nazi Germany.

Engraved above the flame, it says, from Deuteronomy 4:9: "Only guard yourself and guard your soul carefully, lest you forget the things your eyes saw, and lest these things depart your heart all the days of your life, and you shall make them known to your children, and your children's children."

Today we commit to telling our future generations the truth shared at the Holocaust museum. This heinous act was committed at the entrance to sacred ground to us, the Holocaust museum, as I described, where some of the Earth was gathered from. This is a severe blow to all of us who care about these issues, and I would include that to be everyone in the Congress of the United States and in our great country and those throughout the world who promise never to forget.

□ 1615

So we commit never to forget, and we commit to continue our work to build a world free of hatred.

Again, I thank our colleagues for giving us a time to publicly mourn this horrible, horrible event; to extend our condolences to the family of that brave guard and also to acknowledge, like Stephen Johns, our own Capitol Police and many others who make this area safer for people to visit from all over the world, who make it safer for us to do our jobs here, who make it safer for the press to cover us, who make it safer for our staffs to work, we express our deep gratitude to them. For us, the words Gibson and Chestnut are forever ablaze in our hearts—two of those committed to guard the Capitol whose lives were taken over 10 years ago. We will add to that list Stephen Johns and never forget the sacrifice he made and never forget our responsibility again to end the world of hatred.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to a valued member of our Committee on Natural Resources, the gentleman from American Samoa, Mr. ENI FALEOMAVAEGA.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I want to thank Chairman RAHALL and our ranking member, DOC HASTINGS, and the members of the committee for bringing this important resolution to the floor. I also want to commend both gentlemen, Congressman KLEIN and Congressman PENCE, as co-Chairs of our Caucus on anti-Semitism. Of course, the memory of Tom Lantos evokes all of the understanding that we have and appreciation for this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I want to personally express my deepest condolences and sympathies to the family and friends of Officer Johns, who was killed unexpectedly yesterday as a result of a shooting

by a man who harbored so much hatred against members of our Jewish community.

Officer Johns, for some 6 years, served faithfully as a security officer there at the museum. He was doing his job. He made the ultimate sacrifice, and we are here to honor him and his life. He gave his life in order to save the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that every person who visits our Nation's Capital makes it a point—a must—to visit the Holocaust Memorial Museum. This revered museum is a symbol of our Nation to the world that racism, bigotry, ignorance, and hatred have no place in our country. This museum reminds the world of the suffering of some 6 million Jews, and we should never forget that, if it happened to them, it could also happen to us.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. JESSE JACKSON.

(Mr. JACKSON of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Last night, Mr. Speaker, I tried to explain this horrific event to my daughter when she asked me why. I tried to tell her that African Americans fought for our country in World War II, and a Holocaust survivor once said and told the story of how survivors of the Holocaust knew they had been freed when African Americans showed up, knowing full well, because of their race, that they could not be Nazis even if some African Americans had to fight under a different flag.

African Americans and Jewish Americans banded together in many of our Nation's great campaigns for social justice. Martin Luther King, Jr., used to often quote Rabbi Abraham Heschel. Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney—two Jews and a black killed for registering people to vote in Mississippi.

Stephen Tyrone Johns lost his life defending visitors at a Holocaust Museum in the hands of a white supremacist. As I believe President Lincoln would paraphrase: Their sacrifice as martyrs is far above our own ability to add or detract.

I would hope in this moment that we would recognize that the ties of human decency and dignity that bind us and the blood that unites us are stronger than the hatred and the demagoguery and the acts of violence that divide us. It is my sincere hope, Mr. Speaker, that we might find some shining moment in recognizing that we have more in common in working together than we do in fighting and in being apart.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California, Ms. JANE HARMAN.

Ms. HARMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, less than a mile from this Chamber, a hate crime occurred yesterday. It occurred in a place of remembrance—a sanctuary. That sanctuary, the Holocaust Museum, has

meaning for everyone here. It has special meaning for me because my father was a refugee from that Holocaust, and most of his family was killed in it. One exhibit in the Holocaust Museum is a wall of shoes taken from innocent men, women and children before they were gassed to death. Who were they? What lives would they have led? Would their children have ended up serving here as I have?

In the memory of Officer Johns and 6 million innocent Jews, it is time, past time, to end hate.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. STEVE COHEN.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, Mr. JACKSON expressed much of what I've thought about as to the events of yesterday.

People who hate—and this assailant hated Jews and blacks in particular—hate all people and minorities.

With that in mind, I think it's important that people reflect and do something positive with their children and with themselves in the future as an antidote to the type of hate that we saw. That is to bring your children to the Holocaust Museum. Let them learn about the horrors of the Nazis and of the camps. Come to Memphis to the Civil Rights Museum and learn about civil rights. Go to Atlanta where Dr. King is buried, and learn about Dr. King and nonviolence. Take steps to learn about ways to make the world better.

It's unfortunate what happened yesterday. It's so awful at that site, but it is awful that it happened anywhere and that Mr. Johns did lose his life. We must appreciate all the guards who protect American order and liberty.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SERRANO). The Chair will note that the gentleman from West Virginia has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. GARY PETERS.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, my district is the home of the first free-standing Holocaust Museum in the United States of America. For 25 years, it has stood as a reminder of the horrific consequences of extremism and hate.

Just a few months ago, the founder of that museum, Rabbi Charles Rosenzweig, passed away. Although he is gone, his life's work will educate future generations about the horrors of the Holocaust so that such senseless violence should never again be repeated. Last month, this body passed a resolution honoring his life and memory.

So it is with an especially heavy heart today that I come to the floor to urge the passage of Resolution 529, a resolution condemning the violent attack on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10.

The Holocaust Museum exists as a place to reflect and to mourn murderous prejudice and hatred. Yet, yesterday, a senseless attack, motivated

by the same prejudice and hatred, resulted in the tragic death of a security guard, Stephen T. Johns. It is a sad reminder that we must all remain vigilant in continuing the work of Rabbi Rosenzweig—to purge discrimination and hatred from this world.

I thank Congressman KLEIN for sponsoring this important resolution.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ).

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to all of those who have denounced the hatred and violence in condemning yesterday's tragic attack at the U.S. Holocaust Museum and to extend my thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of Officer Stephen Johns.

Racism, anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred are not new. Sadly, they continue to impact too many people here and around the world. As a child of a Holocaust survivor, I know all too well the destruction and suffering that hate can bring. This same kind of intolerance that my mother faced in Austria in the 1930s still feeds the actions of foreign terrorists and domestic hate groups.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is more than a museum—it feels like a sacred space. It is a place that enables us to acknowledge and remember the horror that was the Holocaust—and it is a place for reflection on the horrific consequences that hate can bring and a reminder that we must remain ever-vigilant against hate's many manifestations. Yesterday's despicable act reinforces the need for the important work done by the Holocaust Museum.

We all have a role to play in combating bigotry and intolerance wherever it may be, and it is a sad reminder of the work we still have to do that yesterday's tragic crime occurred so soon after President Obama's historic trip and his strong rebuttal of those who deny the Holocaust.

So it is with a heavy heart that I join my colleagues in offering my sympathies to the family of Officer Johns, and that I commend the work—the wonderful work, the important work—of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and that I pledge to do my part in never forgetting.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. KEITH ELLISON.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to do two things: one, to offer condolences and thanks to the family of Officer Johns for his brave sacrifice and, also, to point out that Officer Johns dedicated his life to protecting the staff and visitors of an institution dedicated to remembering both the depths of human depravity and the heights of courage and bravery, as we must understand that the Holocaust Museum was not simply a place to remember loss, awful loss, but also courage in standing up to great adversity.

May we all celebrate the life of Officer Johns and of the 6 million Jews who were murdered and memorialized

in the Holocaust Museum by going to the Holocaust Museum, by supporting that museum and by showing defiantly that we will not be cowards and that we will not be deterred from standing up for what is right.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California, Ms. DIANE WATSON.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, lest we forget, we must constantly be vigilant that we have people in this country who still harbor hate. As we go looking around the world for those who would do mass carnage, we need to look right inside of ourselves and see what is happening among too many of our people.

Officer Johns was there. I understand he opened the door for the person who shot him, but he represented a minority, and the shooter went to a place where he could show his anger, his hate, his hostility. As long as these kinds of people allow this to grow within them, we are all at risk. As long as we let guns go unregistered and let them out there and in the hands of these people, each and every one of us is at risk.

So it is now the time not only to give our condolences to the family of Officer Johns, but to take a step in the right direction for the right policy that will keep this in our minds every day of our lives.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 529, condemning the violent attack on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10, 2009, and honoring the bravery and dedication of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum employees and security personnel.

I express my deepest sympathy to the family, friends, and colleagues of Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns who lost his life as he stood guard at the museum. Officer Johns was only 39 years old; and standing six feet, six inches tall, was known as a "gentle giant". He was lovingly called "Little Stephen" by his family and "Big John" by his colleagues. Officer Johns must always be remembered in our hearts and minds as a hero.

Mr. Speaker, hatred must not be tolerated, and acts of violence must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentleman, my friend from West Virginia, for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise, of course, in support of this resolution. We are all shocked and saddened about what happened yesterday. The Holocaust Memorial Museum is a museum dedicated to victims of genocide, and to have any kind of hatred perpetrated in that museum is an absolute disgrace. My heart goes out to Officer Johns and to Officer Johns' family in that he was doing what so many wonderful people do—protect the public and protect us. His life should not have been taken.

Mr. Speaker, hatred is a terrible thing. The person who did the shooting reportedly has a long history of hating Jews, of hating African Americans, of

hating Catholics—of just about hating everybody. We need to do something about that. We need to teach our children that hatred isn't a part of mainstream anything and that people need to respect our fellow human beings.

I also want to say something about guns, because we really need to deal with the problem of guns in this country. I would like to know why the assassin who served in prison for 6 years as a felon and who was a known hater was able to get ahold of a gun. This is a problem, and we need to deal with it.

So I thank my friend, and I rise in support of this resolution.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I would advise Mr. HASTINGS that I am prepared to close with one final speaker if he wishes to use the balance of his time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good resolution, and it is responsive to what happened yesterday at a place where something like this should never happen. So I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" for the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to the sponsor of this resolution and commend him for the quickness with which he has brought this to the floor, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 2 minutes.

□ 1630

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I thank the gentleman from Washington and the gentleman from West Virginia for giving us the opportunity, as well as the Speaker, for allowing us to very promptly bring this to the attention of the House.

I thank the Members, the Democrat and Republican Members, who have all been here today, as well as the entire Chamber for reacting and acknowledging this horrific act. Again, we just acknowledge and extend our condolences to the family.

We rededicate ourselves to the necessity of teaching, of educating our public in the United States and around the world about what happens when racism and intolerance are allowed to fester from generation to generation, and we know that we will commit ourselves to continue that education process to the lessons of the Holocaust and the lessons of, unfortunately, what happened yesterday to make sure that it doesn't happen again.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I stand with so many of my colleagues today in condemnation of yesterday's appalling attack at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the tragic death of Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns, who was killed in the line of duty.

Bigotry, racism and intolerance must be condemned wherever they occur, but especially at a memorial to the Holocaust that chal-

lenges visitors to confront hatred and promote human dignity. The Holocaust Museum is a hollowed symbol of the cost of this type of hatred to all of humanity. The Museum teaches millions of people about the dangers of unchecked hatred. We do not need further examples of hate and prejudice within its walls—or anywhere else.

The events of yesterday serve as a reminder that the Museum, and all of us, have more work to do to confront hatred and intolerance in our society.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for the resolution and also in expressing condolences to the family of Officer Johns.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened by the news of yesterday's shooting at the Holocaust Memorial Museum and express my condolences to the victim's family.

It is unfortunate that, even in today's world, there are still individuals who choose to deny the tragic events of the Holocaust. In the face of those who adhere to hatred, we must continue to stress the importance of knowledge over ignorance, with the hope that we can prevent future tragedies such as this.

And that is just what the Holocaust Museum strives to do. Each year, some 2 million people from around the world visit the museum where they are confronted with a record of the horrors of the Holocaust so that no one can deny its existence. The museum not only reminds us of the atrocities of the Holocaust, but it shows us what happens when hatred, intolerance, and ignorance are allowed to direct the actions of men. The museum calls each one of us to recognize the humanity in all people, regardless of our differences. Its role in educating visitors about the responsibilities each individual has and its efforts to promote tolerance, understanding, and acceptance continue to be needed.

I wish to express my condolences to the family, friends and coworkers of Stephen T. Johns. The outstanding courage demonstrated by Mr. Johns and all those who serve to protect citizens should not be taken for granted. My thoughts and prayers are with them.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Stephen T. Johns, an innocent man who lost his life while securing the countless people who stream into one of the national treasures in our capital city, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

In the building that was erected to preserve the memory of the martyrs and heroes of the Holocaust, the ugly face of bigotry cast a dark shadow over the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on June 10, 2009. The Museum is a place of stillness and personal reflection, and that calm was broken by a gunman who shattered that silence. People from around the country and the world come to that location to learn what the powerful phrase "Never Again" really means. Visitors take that message to their home communities to serve as spokespeople against bigotry, racism and hatred. That message needs to resonate throughout this country even more so today.

Though this senseless and hateful act of violence is deplorable and has tainted the Museum's stance as a poignant reminder of the millions of innocent people who lost their lives in the Holocaust, it is my hope that the hate that continues to exist in our country will soon cease.